Emily K. Sanders

Project 4

Problem Statement

Draft 1

May 7, 2024

Research has shown that there are many social determinants of educational success, beyond just any child or young adult’s ability (citations), and that obtaining a 4-year degree from an accredited institution leads to greater prosperity, stability, and quality of life throughout an individual’s lifetime (citations). Therefore, we aim to use publicly available data about a variety of social conditions across California counties to predict the percentage of the population (25 years or older) who have achieved a 4 year degree. If a suitable predictive model can be created, it will allow policy-makers to anticipate the percentage of the county population likely to hold a college degree if current trends continue, and make decisions based on the knock-on effects of degree-holding. Furthermore, if a model suitable for interpretation can be created, it will allow us and policy-makers to evaluate which social determinants are most influential on the rate of degree acquisition, and make policy recommendations accordingly.